

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-08 EUR-12 OMB-01 ACDA-07 SSM-03 IO-13

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 MC-02 TRSE-00 SAM-01

SAB-01 EB-07 DHA-02 SCCT-01 /115 W

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R 190931Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3484

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL UZE TRIPOLI 0982

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PROP, LY, EG

SUBJ: LIBYAN-EGYPTIAN PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN

REF: TRIPOLI 0740 (NOTAL), CAIRO 9581

SUMMARY: WHILE QADHAFI HAS MUTED LOCAL PROPAGANDA AGAINST EGYPT AS OF MAY 25, VITUPERATIVE EXCHANGES CONTINUE NEVERTHELESS WITH POUNDING OF HEAVY EGYPTAIN PROPAGANDA GUNDS HAVING MEASURABLY GREATER IMPACT ON LARG. LOCAL BARRAGES OF CRITICISM FIRED AT EGYPT WITH AMMUNITION OBTAINED FROM SECONDARY NEWS MEDIA SOURCES. DISTORATIONS ARE RAMPANT ON BOTH SIDES, BUT PARANOIA BEGINNING TO BE FELT IN LARG. END SUMMARY.

1. SINCE MAY 25 PLEDGE TO CALL OF MEDIA HOUNDS IN LIBYAN PROPAGANDA WAR WITH EGYPT (REFTEL), COL. QADHAFI HAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MUZZLED DIRECT LAR CRITICISM OF SADAT REGIME. HOWEVER,

QADHAFI HAS NOT COMPLETELY SILENCED LAR MEDIA WHICH APPEARS TO BE OPERATING UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO DIRECT ITS CRITICAL BARBS AT EGYPT ONLY WITH MATERIAL ORIGINATING FROM SECONDARY ARAB AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA SOURCES.

2. CASE IN POINT IS LAR PRESS REPORT OF ALLEGED GOE INVOLVEMENT IN BOMBING OF SYRIAN AIRLINES OFFICE IN KUWAIT. (REFTEL). LOCAL MEDIAL QUOTES KUWAITI NEWS REPORTS OF ALLEGED GOK ACCUSATION AGAINST EGYPTIAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE ACTIVITIES. ARTICLE AGAIN SIGHTING INFORMED KUWAITI SOURCES REFERS TO EGYPTAIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR BOMBAING "AL ANBAA" NEWSPAPER BUILDING AND PLOT TO FOMENT CONFLICT BETWEEN GULF STATES AND PALESTINIAN RESIDENTS.

3. JULY 16, CRITICISM OF SADAT'S REGIME TOOK SIMILAR TACK QUOTING "DAILY TELEGRAPH" STORY OF EGYPTAIN AUTHORITIES SUPPRESSING "ARMED INSURRECTION" OF EGYPTAIN FARMERS IN TOWN OF KANA AND FOURTEEN OTHER VILLAGES OF SOUTHERN EGYPT. LAR MEDIA VERSIONS INDICATES FARMERS OPPOSING NEW LAW EXPROPRIATING LANDS ORIGNAILLY DISTRIBUTED UNDER NASSER'S SOCIALIST REGIME. GOE AUTHORITIES ALLEGEDLY ALSO CONFISCATED 1,237 WEAPONS FROM FARMERS. QUOTED "DAILY TELEGRAPH" STORY REPOREDLY ORIGINATED IN RECENT ISSUE OF EGYPTAIN MAGAZINE "AKHER SA'AH."

4. LAR MEDIA COMMENTS ALMOST DAILY ON ATTACKTS FROM "AKBAR AL YOM" AND "AL AHRAH" ON COLONEL QADHAFI. COMMENTARY HAS BEEN LIMITED TO LAMENT OVER "UNJUSTIFIED" UNILATERAL ATTACKS BY EGYPTAIN MEDIA. HOWEVER, CONSTANT LAR REFERENCE TO EGYPT, THOUGH ATTRIBUTED TO SECONDARY MEDIA SOURCES, APPEARS TO SIGNAL PRELIMINARY LAR SALVO OF INTENSIFIED EXCHANGE OF BITTER VITUPERATION BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES.

5. EGYPTAIN DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUE EXPRESSED TO EMBOFF GRAVE CONCERN OVER WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS DETERIORATING RELATIONS BETWEEN LAR AND EGYPT. HE INDIRECTLY CRITICIZED OWN'S GOVERNMENT'S EFFECTIVE PROPAGANDA WHICH HE STATED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WAS "GETTING OUT OF HAND". HE SAID PROPAGANDA HAD CREATED AIR OF APPREHENSION IN LARG WHICH IS CAUSING LIBYANDS TO PERCEIVE EGYPTIAN PLOT IN EVERY MEETING HELD BY GOE.

6. EMBOFF POINTED TO LARG ACCUSATION THAT RECENT EGYPTAIN, SUDANESE, SAUDI MEETING IS FOR PURPOSE OF FORMULATING MILITARY PACT AGAINST QADHAFI. COLLEAGUE

RESPONDED LOCAL PRESS SPECULATION EXPRESSING THIS SUSPECTION ONLY REFLECTS QADHAFI'S PARANOIA OF A COUP ATTEMPT AGAINST HIM. HE STATED IT WAS TOO EARLY TO GUESS PURPOSE OF MEETING WHICH EVEN HE DID NOT KNOW. COLLEAGUE EXPRESSED FEAR THAT PRESENT POLITICAL CLIMATE IN TRIPOLI DID NOT MAKE IT A PLACE HE PERSONALLY WANTED TO BE THIS MOMENT.

COMMENT: COLLEAGUE IMPLIED THROUGHOUT CONVERSATION THAT HIS GOVERNMENT BELIVED QADHAFI HAD "GOTTEN OUT OF HAND" INSTEAD OF EGYPTAIN PROPAGANDA. ALSO IMPLIED, BY NOT DENYING LOCAL PRESS SPECULATION CONCERNING TRIPARTITE MEETING IN RYADH, WAS THAT SPECULATION MAY BE WELL GROUNDED IN FACT.
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